



Department of Justice

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Middle District of Florida

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JURY FINDS EARL HUNTER (a/k/a "Fifty") GUILTY

Tampa, Florida - U.S. Attorney Robert E. O'Neill announces that a federal jury today found Earl Hunter, a/k/a "Fifty", (39, Tampa) guilty of distributing crack cocaine to an undercover Tampa police officer. Hunter faces a mandatory minimum term of ten years in federal prison and a maximum penalty of life in federal prison. Hunter's sentencing hearing is scheduled for May 4, 2011, at 10:30 a.m.

According to evidence presented at trial, on March 12, 2010, Hunter, who was going by the alias "Fifty", distributed more than five grams of crack cocaine to an undercover officer working with the Tampa Police Department. This drug transaction was a part of the Tampa Police Department's initiative to address drug distribution activities in the Grant Park neighborhood of Tampa. At the time of this offense, Hunter was on federal supervised release after having served over nine years in federal prison for distribution of crack cocaine in 1999.

The Grant Park neighborhood is part of the Department of Justice's Weed and Seed initiative. Weed and Seed is a USDOJ sponsored effort designed to "weed out" drug trafficking and violent crime offenses, while collaborating with community stakeholders to "seed" neighborhoods with programs of positive change. It is a partnership among the

United States Attorney's Office, local, state, and federal law enforcement, local government, and residents.

This case was investigated by the Tampa Police Department. It was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Simon Gaugush and Jennifer Peresie.